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Species at Risk Act

Annual Report

for 2012

Canada

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The Act establishes a process for conducting scientific assessments of the status of individual wildlife species and a mechanism for listing extirpated, endangered, threatened and special-concern species. SARA also includes provisions for the protection, recovery and management of listed wildlife species and their critical habitats[1] and residences.[2]

1.3 Responsible Authorities for Implementation of SARA

The Parks Canada Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Environment Canada are the three government organizations, commonly referred to as the "competent" departments, that share responsibility for the implementation of SARA. The ministers responsible for these organizations are known as the "competent" ministers under SARA. The Minister of the Environment is the minister responsible for both Environment Canada and the Parks Canada Agency. Ministerial responsibilities are as follows:

- The Minister responsible for Parks Canada Agency is responsible for individuals of species found in or on federal lands and waters that it administers.
- The Minister of Fisheries and Oceans is responsible for aquatic species at risk other than individuals in or on federal lands administered by the Parks Canada Agency.
- The Minister of the Environment is responsible for all other species at risk.

The competent ministers have the authority to make many of the decisions in their areas of responsibility, including ministerial protection orders.

The Minister of the Environment is the minister responsible for the overall administration of SARA, except in so far as the Act gives responsibility to another minister (i.e., the other competent minister).

1. Under SARA, "critical habitat" is defined as the habitat that is necessary for the survival or recovery of a listed wildlife species and that is identified as the species' critical habitat in the recovery strategy or in an action plan for the species (see section 4.2).
2. "Residence" means a dwelling-place, such as a den, nest or other similar area or place, that is occupied or habitually occupied by one or more individuals during all or part of their life cycles, including breeding, rearing, staging, wintering, feeding or hibernating.

The Minister of the Environment is required to consult with the other competent ministers as necessary on matters related to SARA administration. Orders in Council to list species under SARA are made by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment.

2 WILDLIFE ASSESSMENT AND LISTING UNDER SARA

SARA establishes a process for conducting scientific assessments of the status of individual wildlife species. The Act separates the scientific assessment process from the listing decision, ensuring that scientists provide independent assessments and that decisions affecting Canadians are made by elected officials who are accountable for those decisions.

2.1 COSEWIC Assessments

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) is the committee of experts that assesses the status of wildlife species in Canada that it considers to be at risk and identifies existing and potential threats to the species. It includes members from government, academia, Aboriginal organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The federal government provides financial support to COSEWIC.

COSEWIC assesses the status of a wildlife species using the best available information on the biological status of a species, including scientific knowledge, community knowledge and Aboriginal traditional knowledge. The committee provides assessments and supporting evidence annually to the Minister of the Environment.

To help prioritize species for assessments, COSEWIC uses the general status ranks outlined in the reports entitled *Wild Species: The General Status of Species in Canada*. These reports are produced every five years by the National General Status Working Group (see section 7.3.4), a joint federal–provincial–territorial initiative led by Environment Canada.

COSEWIC can assess wildlife species as extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened, of special concern, data-deficient or not at risk:

- An extinct wildlife species no longer exists anywhere in the world.
- An extirpated wildlife species no longer exists in the wild in Canada but exists elsewhere in the world.
- An endangered wildlife species faces imminent extirpation or extinction.
- A threatened wildlife species is likely to become endangered if nothing is done to reverse the factors leading to its extirpation or extinction.
- A wildlife species of special concern may become threatened or endangered because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats.

Further details on risk categories and more information on COSEWIC are available at www.cosewic.gc.ca.

The first report, *Wild Species 2000*, provided general assessments of 1670 species in Canada. The second report, *Wild Species 2005*, presented general status assessments for 7732 species from all provinces, territories and ocean regions, representing all of Canada's vertebrate species (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals), all of Canada's vascular plants, and four invertebrate groups (freshwater mussels, crayfishes, ordinates and tiger beetles). The third report, *Wild Species 2010*, included assessments of 11 950 species. Reports from the Wild Species series have greatly increased the number and variety of species assessed nationally, but with the total number of species in Canada estimated at more than 70 000, there are still many species left to be assessed. The reports can be found at www.wildspecies.ca.

Environment Canada, the Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada provide input to the assessment process via their representation on COSEWIC and through the population surveys that they conduct on some species of interest to COSEWIC. They are also regularly involved in the peer review of COSEWIC status reports.

In keeping with section 20 of SARA, Environment Canada provides COSEWIC with professional, technical, secretarial, clerical and other assistance that is necessary to carry out its functions via the COSEWIC Secretariat, which is housed within Environment Canada.

The data on aquatic species that Fisheries and Oceans Canada submits to COSEWIC to use when assessing species is vetted through a peer-review process. Experts from academia, government scientists and stakeholders, as appropriate, take part in the process. In 2012, information on four aquatic species was collected by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and was peer-reviewed before being submitted to COSEWIC.

When an aquatic species is assessed as threatened or endangered by COSEWIC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, as the competent department under SARA, undertakes a number of actions. One of those actions is collecting scientific data to develop a recovery potential assessment. A recovery potential assessment gives valuable information on the current status of the species, the distribution, the threats to the species, and most importantly, the feasibility of its recovery. Fisheries and Oceans Canada completed recovery potential assessments for 11 aquatic species in 2012.

In 2012, the Parks Canada Agency continued to conduct detailed assessments to measure the conservation status of individual species by heritage place. Detailed assessments will be updated to help determine changes in species population levels, and to evaluate the effectiveness of management activities for species. This diagnostic tool helps the Agency to develop site-based action plans to identify feasible recovery opportunities and knowledge gaps for species at risk at each heritage place under the Agency's responsibility (i.e., national parks, national marine conservation areas, national historic sites and historic canals).

Approximately 50% of Canada's species at risk have been reported on those lands and waters. In total, 175 species at risk regularly occur in one or more of Parks Canada's heritage places. In 2012, the Agency either completed (reviewed or approved) or drafted a total of 134 site-specific detailed assessments for species at risk found within Parks Canada's protected heritage places. The information in detailed assessments contributes to the Wild Species reports, to COSEWIC status reports and to the development of Parks Canada site-based action plans.

NHIC Assists Parks Canada with Botanical Fieldwork in Point Pelee National Park

In 2012, the Ontario Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) assisted staff at Point Pelee National Park with several botanical studies in the park. A NHIC botanist worked closely with Point Pelee National Park biologists on the project. Parks Canada established vegetation monitoring plots on Middle Island, the southernmost island in Canada, to monitor the effects of changing cormorant numbers on the island's vegetation and flora. Populations of several species at risk occur on Middle Island, and during the 2012 fieldwork, the following were encountered: Wild Hyacinth, Blue Ash, Kentucky Coffee-tree, Red Mulberry and Common Hop-tree. Other significant plant species encountered during fieldwork on Middle Island included: Short's Rockcress, rediscovered on the island after not being seen for more than a decade; Smooth Clustered Sedge, known in Canada only from Middle Island; Eastern Few-fruited Sedge, first record for Middle Island; Yellow Corydalis; Appendaged Waterleaf; Large-seeded Forget-me-not; and Miami-mist. Through this partnership, the NHIC provided the new information to COSEWIC to inform the species assessment work.

Another aspect of the Parks Canada project was conducting a one-day workshop on plant identification and surveying and monitoring techniques.

NHIC and Parks Canada field crew for the Point Pelee National Park botanical survey work, standing at the most southerly point of Canada, on Middle Island (May 10, 2012).

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2.1.1 COSEWIC Subcommittee on Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge

SARA requires that COSEWIC assess the conservation status of wildlife species on the basis of the best available information, including scientific knowledge, community knowledge and Aboriginal traditional knowledge (ATK). The Act also requires that COSEWIC establish a supporting subcommittee on ATK.

Activities of the ATK Subcommittee (ATK SC) for 2012 included the following:

- Three ATK SC meetings were held in 2012: in Ottawa, Ontario, in January; in Little Shuswap Lake, British Columbia, in June; and in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, in October. The January and October meetings provided an opportunity for discussion of status reports for wildlife species assessed by COSEWIC this past year. At the June meeting, the ATK SC prioritized and selected wildlife species for which ATK projects would be undertaken. At all ATK SC meetings, ATK project reports were reviewed for suitability to send to COSEWIC status report writers and COSEWIC Species Specialist Subcommittee Co-chairs.
- The ATK SC completed ATK source reports for a number of wildlife species including Shortjaw Cisco, Lake Sturgeon, Green Sturgeon, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Sockeye Salmon, Eastern Box Turtle, Spotted Turtle, Cassins Auklet, Blue Ash, Wolverine, Grey Whale, Beluga Whale, Atlantic Walrus and Narwhal. ATK source reports are resources that list the documented information sources that may provide relevant ATK for a given wildlife species.
- The ATK SC completed ATK assessment reports for a number of wildlife species including Wolverine, Plains and Wood Bison, Atlantic Walrus, Caribou, a Grizzly Bear "supplemental" report, and Sockeye Salmon. ATK assessment reports, using ATK source reports, compile available and relevant ATK for a given wildlife species. The ATK SC initiated ATK assessment reports for a number of wildlife species including Beluga Whale, Wolverine and Chinook Salmon.

- This past year, the ATK SC initiated the production of its first ATK designatable units (discrete and evolutionarily significant units of the taxonomic species) report, which is intended to inform COSEWIC on the proposed designatable units of the Beluga Whale from the perspective of ATK Holders. Also in development is an ATK gathering report, which is intended to compile available and relevant ATK information gathered directly from ATK Holders.
- The ATK SC also initiated production of three manuals intended for use by COSEWIC, the COSEWIC Species Specialist Subcommittees and status report writers. These manuals will provide instruction and background information on working with ATK and ATK reports. As well, they will contain items to consider in order to appropriately and accurately integrate ATK into a COSEWIC status report.

2.1.2 Wildlife Species Assessments in 2012

COSEWIC finalized the following wildlife species assessments, grouped in batches, between 2002 and 2012:

- Batch 1: 115 wildlife species in May 2002, November 2002 and May 2003
- Batch 2: 59 wildlife species in November 2003 and May 2004
- Batch 3: 73 wildlife species in November 2004 and May 2005
- Batch 4: 68 wildlife species in April 2006
- Batch 5: 64 wildlife species in November 2006 and April 2007
- Batch 6: 46 wildlife species in November 2007 and April 2008
- Batch 7: 48 wildlife species in November 2008 and April 2009
- Batch 8: 79 wildlife species in November 2009 and April 2010
- Batch 9: 92 wildlife species in November 2010 and May 2011
- Batch 10: 64 wildlife species in November 2011 and May 2012

Details on batches 1 through 10 can be found in Table 3 (see section 2.2.4), and in previous SARA annual reports at www.sararegistry.gc.ca/approach/act/sara_annual_e.cfm.

Batch 10

At the November 2011 and May 2012 meetings, COSEWIC finalized assessments and classification reviews of 64 wildlife species:

- Two (2) wildlife species were examined and found to be data-deficient.
- Six (6) wildlife species were assessed as not at risk (this included 1 species already listed on Schedule 1 as Threatened, which was assessed as no longer at risk).
- One (1) wildlife species was assessed as extinct.
- Fifty-five (55) wildlife species were assessed as at risk, of which 26 were confirmed at the classification already attributed to them on Schedule 1 of SARA.[3]

COSEWIC forwarded these assessments to the Minister of the Environment in early fall 2012.

Emergency Assessments:

In late fall 2011, in response to a request for an emergency assessment of three species of bats (Little Brown Myotis [*Myotis lucifugus*], Northern Myotis [*Myotis septentrionalis*] and Tri-colored Bat [*Perimyotis subflavus*]), the Chair of COSEWIC established an Emergency Assessment Subcommittee to assess the status of these species based on information available through 2010. On February 3, 2012, COSEWIC's Emergency Assessment Subcommittee unanimously assessed all three species as Endangered. COSEWIC forwarded a copy of the assessment to the Minister on February 22, 2012.

3. Every 10 years, or earlier if warranted, COSEWIC must review the classification of wildlife species previously designated in a category of risk, with an updated status report, if it has reason to believe the status of the species has changed significantly. As necessary, COSEWIC may also reassess other wildlife species previously found not at risk or data-deficient with an updated status report.

2.2 Listing

2.2.1 Listing Process

Upon formally receiving COSEWIC's assessments, the Minister of the Environment has 90 days to post a response statement on the Species at Risk Public Registry indicating how the Minister intends to respond to each assessment and, to the extent possible, providing timelines for action.

During this 90-day period, the competent minister carries out an internal review to determine the level of public consultation and socio-economic analysis necessary to inform the listing decision. Timelines for action and the scope of consultations included in the response statement are based on the results of this initial review.

The next step in the listing process is for the Minister of the Environment to provide the COSEWIC assessments to the Governor in Council, and for the Governor in Council to officially acknowledge receipt of the assessments by publishing, in the *Canada Gazette*, an order acknowledging receipt.

Following receipt by Governor in Council of the assessments, the Minister must prepare a recommendation to the Governor in Council regarding each of the species proposed for listing, delisting, reclassification or referral back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration. When making a recommendation to the Governor in Council, the Minister of the Environment cannot vary the status of a species as assessed by COSEWIC. As required by the Cabinet Directive on Streamlining Regulation, the competent minister will conduct public consultations and socio-economic analyses, and consider the results prior to making a recommendation. Under section 27 of SARA, the Governor in Council may, on recommendation of the Minister, decide to add a species to Schedule 1, to change the status designation of a species already listed on Schedule 1 in accordance with the status reassessment by COSEWIC, to not add a species to Schedule 1 of SARA or to remove a species from Schedule 1 of SARA. The Governor in Council also has the authority to refer the assessment back to COSEWIC for further information or consideration. If no decision is made within nine months of receipt of the assessment, the Minister must amend the List of Wildlife Species at Risk in accordance with COSEWIC's assessment.

Species at risk that COSEWIC assessed prior to October 1999 (when it adopted new criteria) were included at proclamation on SARA's schedules 2 (endangered and threatened) and 3 (special concern). These species are being reassessed by COSEWIC using current criteria as part of the process to determine if they should be added to Schedule 1. Species on Schedule 1 benefit from SARA's provisions for recovery and prohibitions in the case of extirpated, endangered or threatened species, or management in the case of special concern. All Schedule 2 species have since been reassessed by COSEWIC. For Schedule 3, 11 species remained to be reassessed at the end of 2012.

The chart shown in Figure 1 further describes the species listing process. Table 3 (see section 2.2.4) provides the status of the listing process for each batch of assessed species.

Figure 1: The Species Listing Process under SARA

The Minister of the Environment receives species assessments from COSEWIC at least once per year.

↓

The competent departments undertake an internal review to determine the extent of public consultation and socio-economic analysis necessary to inform the listing decision.

↓

Within 90 days of receipt of the species assessments prepared by COSEWIC, the Minister of the Environment publishes a response statement on the SARA Public Registry that indicates how he or she intends to respond to the assessment and, to the extent possible, provides timelines for action.

↓

Where appropriate, the competent departments undertake consultations and any other relevant analysis needed to prepare the advice to the Minister of the Environment.

↓

The Minister of the Environment forwards the assessment to the Governor in Council for receipt.

↓

Within nine months of receiving the assessment, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment, may decide whether or not to list the species under Schedule 1 of SARA or refer the assessment to COSEWIC for further information or consideration.

↓

Once a species is added to Schedule 1, it benefits from the applicable provisions of SARA.

2.2.2 Federal Government Response to COSEWIC Assessments

In October 2012, the Minister of the Environment received from COSEWIC the assessments for Batch 10. These wildlife species assessments included 55 species at risk (38 terrestrial and 17 aquatic) and 2 Schedule 1 species found not at risk (1 terrestrial and 1 aquatic). The aquatic species is currently listed on Schedule 1 as one species, but it was reassessed in May 2012 and split into two populations, one of which is not at risk. The two species assessed as not at risk are now eligible for delisting from Schedule 1. The consultation document for terrestrial species was prepared and published in 2012, and the response statements for terrestrial and aquatic species will be issued in early 2013 (for details see section 2.2.3, Public Consultations). The response statements (full list included in Table 1) indicate the following:

- For 18 wildlife species, normal consultations (i.e., consistent with the consultation path that is typical for most species; see Figure 1) will be undertaken. These include 17 terrestrial species and 1 aquatic species. Ten of these 18 species are already listed on Schedule 1—2 as endangered, 5 as threatened and 3 as being of special concern. The 2 endangered species are now eligible to have their risk status lowered ("downlisted") to threatened. Of the 5 threatened species, 3 are now eligible to be downlisted to special concern, 1 is eligible to have its risk status raised ("uplisted") to endangered, and 1 is eligible to be removed from the list ("delisted"). Of the 3 special concern species, 1 is eligible to be uplisted to endangered, and 2 are eligible to be uplisted to threatened.
- For 8 aquatic and 3 terrestrial wildlife species, extended consultations will be undertaken, because listing these species could potentially have marked impacts on the activities of Aboriginal peoples, commercial and recreational fishers, or Canadians at large.
- The Minister will also post 28 response statements for species already listed and for which COSEWIC had confirmed the current Schedule 1 risk status. For these 28 species, no changes to Schedule 1 are required.

Table 1: List of species received from COSEWIC in October 2012 and for which a response statement will be posted in January 2013

COSEWIC risk status	Taxon	English legal name	Scientific name
Normal consultation			
Extirpated	Arthropod	American Burying Beetle	*Nicrophorus americanus*
Endangered	Amphibian	Northern Dusky Salamander (Carolinian population)	*Desmognathus fuscus*
Endangered	Arthropod	Okanagan Efferia	*Efferia okanagana*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Yukon Draba	*Draba yukonensis*
Threatened	Vascular Plant	Eastern Baccharis	*Baccharis halimifolia*
Special Concern	Bird	Baird's Sparrow	*Ammodramus bairdii*
Special Concern	Fish	North Pacific Spiny Dogfish	*Squalus suckleyi*
Special Concern	Mollusc	Magnum Mantleslug	*Magnipelta mycophaga*
Uplist from Special Concern to Endangered	Bird	Yellow-breasted Chat *virens* subspecies	*Icteria virens virens*
Uplist from Special Concern to Threatened	Mammal	Black-tailed Prairie Dog	*Cynomys ludovicianus*
Uplist from Special Concern to Threatened	Bird	Western Screech-Owl *kennicottii* subspecies	*Megascops kennicottii kennicottii*
Uplist from Threatened to Endangered	Arthropod	Behr's Hairstreak	*Satyrium behrii*
Eligible for de-listing from Threatened to Not at Risk	Bird	Hooded Warbler	*Setophaga citrina*
Downlist from Threatened to Special Concern	Vascular Plant	Buffalograss	*Bouteloua dactyloides*
Downlist from Threatened to Special Concern	Vascular Plant	Goldencrest	*Lophiola aurea*
Downlist from Threatened to Special Concern	Vascular Plant	Hairy Prairie-clover	*Dalea villosa*
Downlist from Endangered to Threatened	Bird	Western Screech-Owl *macfarlanei* subspecies	*Megascops kennicottii macfarlanei*
Downlist from Endangered to Threatened	Vascular Plant	Tiny Cryptantha	*Cryptantha minima*
Extended consultation			
Endangered	Fish	Smooth Skate (Funk Island Deep population)	*Malacoraja senta*
Threatened	Fish	American Eel	*Anguilla rostrata*
Threatened	Fish	Plains Minnow	*Hybognathus placitus*
Special Concern	Mammal	Collared Pika	*Ochotona collaris*
Special Concern	Mammal	Grizzly Bear (Western population)	*Ursus arctos*
Special Concern	Bird	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	*Tryngites subruficollis*
Special Concern	Fish	Smooth Skate (Laurentian–Scotian population)	*Malacoraja senta*
Special Concern	Fish	Thorny Skate	*Amblyraja radiata*
Uplist from Special Concern to Endangered	Fish	Silver Chub (Great Lakes–Upper St. Lawrence populations)[1]	*Macrhybopsis storeriana*

Table 1. (Concluded)

COSEWIC risk status	Taxon	English legal name	Scientific name
Uplist from Special Concern to Threatened	Fish	Pugnose Minnow	*Opsopoeodus emiliae*
Eligible for de-listing from Special Concern to Not at Risk	Fish	Silver Chub (Saskatchewan–Nelson River populations)[1]	*Macrhybopsis storeriana*
Status confirmed—no consultations			
Extirpated	Reptile	Pacific Gopher Snake	*Pituophis catenifer catenifer*
Extirpated	Reptile	Pacific Pond Turtle	*Actinemys marmorata*
Extirpated	Moss	Incurved Grizzled Moss	*Ptychomitrium incurvum*
Endangered	Mammal	Blue Whale (Atlantic population)	*Balaenoptera musculus*
Endangered	Mammal	Blue Whale (Pacific population)	*Balaenoptera musculus*
Endangered	Bird	Yellow-breasted Chat *auricollis* subspecies (Southern mountain population)	*Icteria virens auricollis*
Endangered	Reptile	Blue Racer	*Coluber constrictor foxii*
Endangered	Reptile	Leatherback Sea Turtle (Atlantic population)[2]	*Dermochelys coriacea*
Endangered	Reptile	Leatherback Sea Turtle (Pacific population)[2]	*Dermochelys coriacea*
Endangered	Fish	Enos Lake Benthic Threespine Stickleback	*Gasterosteus aculeatus*
Endangered	Fish	Enos Lake Limnetic Threespine Stickleback	*Gasterosteus aculeatus*
Endangered	Fish	Northern Madtom	*Noturus stigmosus*
Endangered	Arthropod	Island Blue	*Plebejus saepiolus insulanus*
Endangered	Mollusc	Snuffbox	*Epioblasma triquetra*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Bearded Owl-clover	*Triphysaria versicolor*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Bluehearts	*Buchnera americana*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	False Hop Sedge	*Carex lupuliformis*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Heart-leaved Plantain	*Plantago cordata*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Hoary Mountain-mint	*Pycnanthemum incanum*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Large Whorled Pogonia	*Isotria verticillata*
Endangered	Moss	Margined Streamside Moss	*Scouleria marginata*
Endangered	Moss	Silver Hair Moss	*Fabronia pusilla*
Threatened	Bird	Marbled Murrelet	*Brachyramphus marmoratus*
Threatened	Moss	Haller's Apple Moss	*Bartramia halleriana*
Special Concern	Mammal	Mountain Beaver	*Aplodontia rufa*
Special Concern	Amphibian	Coastal Tailed Frog	*Ascaphus truei*
Special Concern	Fish	Blackstripe Topminnow	*Fundulus notatus*
Special Concern	Arthropod	Weidemeyer's Admiral	*Limenitis weidemeyerii*

1. Species currently listed on Schedule 1 as one species. Reassessed in May 2012 and split into two populations.
2. Species currently listed on Schedule 1 as one species. Reassessed in May 2012 and split into two populations, status remaining the same for both populations.

2.2.3 Public Consultations

In 2012, the Minister of the Environment completed consultations launched in 2011, for 24 terrestrial species for which status assessments had been received from COSEWIC as part of Batch 9. The consultations were undertaken to provide the Minister with a better understanding of the potential social and economic impacts of proposed changes to Schedule I of SARA and of the value that is placed on biodiversity. Information collected during consultations is used to inform the Minister's recommendations to the Governor in Council.

As well, to facilitate a new round of consultations for 20 other terrestrial species, received as part of Batch 10, the document *Consultation on Amending the List of Species under the* Species at Risk Act: Terrestrial Species – *December 2012* was made publicly available on the Species at Risk Public Registry at www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default_e.cfm?documentID=2437.

In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada consulted Canadians on adding 25 aquatic species (from batches 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10) to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk. Stakeholders and Canadians submitted their comments by email, through the Species at Risk Public Registry, and on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website. Consultation documents were also mailed directly to other government departments, Wildlife Management Boards, stakeholders, Aboriginal peoples and non-governmental organizations for their input. Face-to-face meetings were also held with groups and organizations that could be potentially affected by a listing decision.

2.2.4 Listing Decisions

When making a listing decision, the Governor in Council relies on the scientific assessments provided by COSEWIC, any other relevant scientific information, an assessment of the costs and benefits (including social, cultural and economic) to Canadians, and comments received through consultations with other federal departments or agencies, other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, wildlife management boards, stakeholders and the public. Governor in Council decisions to add a species to Schedule 1 are published as orders amending Schedule 1 of SARA in the *Canada Gazette*, and include Regulatory Impact Analysis Statements. Decisions not to add a species at risk to Schedule 1 of SARA or to refer the matter back to COSEWIC are published in the *Canada Gazette* with an explanatory note. The orders are also posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry (http://sararegistry.gc.ca/document/dspDocument_e.cfm?documentID=2410).

In 2012, 18 species (3 species from Batch 5, 1 from Batch 6, and 14 from Batch 8) were added to Schedule 1 of SARA. Three species (from Batch 8) had their status on Schedule 1 uplisted to a higher risk status and four were downlisted to a lower risk status. The Governor in Council made three decisions to not list in 2012 (from Batch 8).

In July 2012, the Governor in Council received 16 COSEWIC assessments of aquatic species and recommendations on listing from the Minister. The Governor in Council has nine months to decide whether to list the species under Schedule 1 of SARA or refer the assessment to COSEWIC for further information or consideration. These assessments include:

- Three species from Batch 9 that underwent normal consultations;
- Three species from Batch 8 (two confirmation of status and one normal consultation);
- Two species from Batch 7, two species from Batch 5, three species from Batch 4, one species from Batch 3, all of which underwent extended consultations;
- One species from Batch 2; and
- One species originally from Batch 1, which was referred back to COSEWIC in 2006, at which time COSEWIC confirmed its original assessment.

Table 2: SARA listing decision made by the Governor in Council in 2012

Risk status	Taxon	English legal name	Scientific name
Moved to a higher level of risk (uplisted)			
Endangered	Reptile	Queensnake	*Regina septemvittata*
Endangered	Amphibian	Fowler's Toad	*Anaxyrus fowleri*
Threatened	Bird	Lewis's Woodpecker	*Melanerpes lewis*
Moved to a lower level of risk (downlisted)			
Threatened	Mammal (terrestrial)	Swift Fox	*Vulpes velox*
Special Concern	Vascular Plant	Redroot	*Lachnanthes caroliniana*
Special Concern	Vascular Plant	Tubercled Spike-rush	*Eleocharis tuberculosa*
Special Concern	Vascular Plant	Western Blue Flag	*Iris missouriensis*
Added to List of Wildlife Species at Risk (listed)			
Endangered	Bird	Red Knot *rufa* subspecies	*Calidris canutus rufa*
Endangered	Arthropod	Bert's Predaceous Diving Beetle	*Sanfilippodytes bertae*
Endangered	Arthropod	Bogbean Buckmoth	*Hemileuca* sp.
Endangered	Arthropod	Northern Barrens Tiger Beetle	*Cicindela patruela*
Endangered	Arthropod	Rusty-patched Bumble Bee	*Bombus affinis*
Endangered	Arthropod	Wallis' Dark Saltflat Tiger Beetle	*Cicindela parowana wallisi*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Victoria's Owl-clover	*Castilleja victoriae*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Virginia Mallow	*Sida hermaphrodita*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Whitebark Pine	*Pinus albicaulis*
Endangered	Lichen	Pale-bellied Frost Lichen	*Physconia subpallida*
Endangered	Lichen	Vole Ears Lichen	*Erioderma mollissimum*
Threatened	Bird	Bicknell's Thrush	*Catharus bicknelli*
Threatened	Bird	Chestnut-collared Longspur	*Calcarius ornatus*
Special Concern	Bird	Peregrine Falcon *anatum/tundrius*	*Falco peregrinus anatum/ tundrius*
Special Concern	Bird	Red Knot *islandica* subspecies	*Calidris canutus islandica*
Special Concern	Bird	Short-eared Owl	*Asio flammeus*
Special Concern	Mollusc	Threaded Vertigo	*Nearctula* sp.
Special Concern	Lichen	Oldgrowth Specklebelly Lichen	*Pseudocyphellaria rainierensis*
Decisions to not list			
Endangered	Arthropod	Laura's Clubtail	*Stylurus laurae*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Coast Manroot	*Marah oregana*
Endangered	Vascular Plant	Four-leaved Milkweed	*Asclepias quadrifolia*

Table 3: Listing Processes for Species at Risk at Year-end 2012 (Batches 1 to 10)

COSEWIC assessments					Minister Receipt	Consultation process		Governor in Council			Listing decision				
Batch	Date assessed	# of species assessed	# assessed as 'Species at Risk'					Receipt	Proposed listing decision (CGI)*	Final listing decision (CGII)*	Listed	Uplisted†	Downlisted†	Not listed	Referred back
Schedule 1 proclamation	–	–	233		–	–		–			233				
Batch 1	May 2002, Nov. 2002, May 2003	115	95	91 new assessments	Jan. 2004	79 normal		Apr. 2004	Oct. 2004	Jan. 2005	73			5[‡]	1
										July 2005					1
						12 extended		July 2005	Dec. 2005	Apr. 2006	2			4	6
				4 confirmations[††]	–	–		–			–				
Batch 2	Nov. 2003, May 2004	59	51 new assessments		July 2004	44 normal		Oct. 2004	May 2005	July 2005		39		4	1
						3 of the 4 species that were not listed in July 2005[‡‡]		June 2010	July 2010	Feb. 2011		3			
						1 of the 4 species that were not listed in July 2005[‡‡]		July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
						7 extended		Nov. 2005	June 2006	Aug. 2006	4[§]			8[§]	
Batch 3	Nov. 2004, May 2005	73	59	55 new assessments	Aug. 2005	39 normal		Nov. 2005	June 2006	Aug. 2006	38		1		
						16 extended	6 received by Governor in Council	Apr. 2007	July 2007	Dec. 2007	4		2		
							1 received by Governor in Council	June 2008	Jan. 2009	Mar. 2009	1				
							3 received by Governor in Council	June 2009	Dec. 2009	Feb. 2010			3		
							1 received by Governor in Council	Sept. 2010	Dec. 2010	June 2011	1				
							1 received by Governor in Council	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							4 remained under extended consultation	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				4 confirmations[††]	–	–		–			–				

Table 3. (Continued)

COSEWIC assessments					Minister Receipt	Consultation process		Governor in Council			Listing decision				
Batch	Date assessed	# of species assessed	# assessed as 'Species at Risk'					Receipt	Proposed listing decision (CGI)*	Final listing decision (CGII)*	Listed	Uplisted†	Downlisted†	Not listed	Referred back
Batch 4	Apr. 2006	68	54	50 new assessments	Aug. 2006	35 normal**		Apr. 2007	July 2007	Dec. 2007	32	1			1
						15 extended	5 received by Governor in Council	June 2008	Jan. 2009	Mar. 2009	3	1			1
							1 received by Governor in Council	June 2009	Dec. 2009	Feb. 2010				1	
							1 received by Governor in Council	Sept. 2010	Dec. 2010	June 2011	1				
							3 received by Governor in Council	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							5 remained under extended consultation	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				4 confirmations††	–	–		–			–				
		Other listing processes	1 emergency assessment		Apr. 2006	–		–		May 2007				1	
			5 assessment re-submissions***		Dec. 2006	5 normal	1 received by Governor in Council	June 2008	Jan. 2009	Mar. 2009	1				
							2 received by Governor in Council	Sept. 2010	Dec. 2010	June 2011				2	
							1 received by Governor in Council (under normal consultations)	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							1 remaining	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					

Table 3. (Continued)

COSEWIC assessments					Minister Receipt	Consultation process		Governor in Council			Listing decision				
Batch	Date assessed	# of species assessed	# assessed as 'Species at Risk'					Receipt	Proposed listing decision (CGI) *	Final listing decision (CGII) *	Listed	Uplisted†	Downlisted†	Not listed	Referred back
Batch 5	Nov. 2006, Apr. 2007	64	53	45 new assessments	Aug. 2007	23 normal		June 2008	Jan. 2009	Mar. 2009	17	2	4		
						22 extended	6 received by Governor in Council	June 2009	Dec. 2009	Feb. 2010	6				
							1 received by Governor in Council	Sept. 2010	Dec. 2010	June 2011	1				
							3 received by Governor in Council	Oct. 2011	Apr. 2012	June 2012	3				
							2 received by Governor in Council	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							10 remained under extended consultation	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				8 confirmations††	–	–		–			–				
Batch 6	Nov. 2007, Apr. 2008	46	39	25 new assessments	Aug. 2008	20 normal	19 normal	June 2009	Dec. 2009	Feb. 2010	16	3			
							1 received by Governor in Council	June 2009	[2013]	[2013]					
						5 extended	1 received by Governor in Council	Feb. 2011	July 2011	Oct. 2011	1				
							1 received by Governor in Council	Sept. 2010	Oct .2010	June 2011				1	
							1 received by Governor in Council	Oct. 2011	Apr. 2012	June 2012	1				
							2 remained under extended consultation	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				14 confirmations††	–	–		–			–				

Table 3. (Concluded)

COSEWIC assessments					Minister Receipt	Consultation process		Governor in Council			Listing decision				
Batch	Date assessed	# of species assessed	# assessed as 'Species at Risk'					Receipt	Proposed listing decision (CGI)*	Final listing decision (CGII)*	Listed	Uplisted†	Downlisted†	Not listed	Referred back
Batch 7	Nov. 2008, Apr. 2009	48	46	29 new asseessments	Aug. 2009	20 normal	14 normal	June 2010	July 2010	Feb. 2011	13		1		
							6 received by Governor in Council	May 2010	Dec. 2010	June 2011	3	3			
						9 extended	2 received by Governor in Council	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							7 remained under extended consultation	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				17 confirmations	–	–			–				–		
Batch 8	Nov. 2009, Apr. 2010	79	78	44 new assessments	Sept. 2010	27 normal	21 normal	Oct. 2011	Apr. 2012	June 2012	14	3	4		
							3 normal	Oct. 2011	Apr. 2012	July 2012				3	
							1 received by Governor in Council	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							2 remaining normal	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
						17 extended		[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				34 confirmations††	–	2 received by Governor in Council		July 2012	[2013]	[2013]			–		
Batch 9	Nov. 2010, Apr. 2011	92	81	50 new assessments§§	Sept. 2011	27 normal	3 received by Governor in Council	July 2012	[2013]	[2013]					
							24 normal	[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
						22 extended		[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				31 confirmations††	–	–			–				–		
Batch 10	Nov. 2011, May 2012	64	57	29 new assessments§§	Oct. 2012	18 normal		[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
						11 extended		[2013]	[2013]	[2013]					
				28 confirmations	–	–			–				–		
			Other listing processes	3 emergency assessments	Feb. 2012				[2013]	[2013]					

* *Canada Gazette* Part I/II.

† Change of the status of a species listed on Schedule 1 to a higher or lower category of risk.

‡ Includes the Polar Bear (referred back to COSEWIC in July 2005 after a decision not to list was made in January 2005).

†† Species on Schedule 1 for which COSEWIC has received/reassessed the status and for which no regulatory change is indicated.

§ COSEWIC assessed White Sturgeon as a single species but, for the recommendation to Governor in Council, Fisheries and Oceans Canada subdivided this population into six populations: of the six populations, four were listed and two were not.

** One species for which the Response statement indicated a Normal consultation path (Harbour Porpoise, Northwest Atlantic population) has not yet been received by Governor in Council.

*** The Governor in Council had referred six species back to COSEWIC for reassessment. In late 2006, COSEWIC found that no reassessment was required for five of these species and so re-submitted the original assessments to the Minister.

‡‡ Further consultations as per land claims agreement requirements.

§§ This includes one species that COSEWIC has requested by referred back for reassessment due to new information being available that was not available at the time of the May 2011 assessment.

2.2.5 SARA Schedule 1 Current Status

When SARA was proclaimed in June 2003, the official List of Wildlife Species at Risk (Schedule 1 of SARA) included 233 species. Starting in 2005, species have been added to the list every year, except in 2008. As of December 31, 2012, Schedule 1 listed 23 extirpated species, 235 endangered species, 125 threatened species and 127 species of special concern, for a total of 510 species.

Tables 4 and 5 show the number of species added to Schedule 1 each year, by risk status and government agency, respectively.

Table 4: Numbers of species added to Schedule 1 each year by risk status, as of December 2012

	Risk status				
Year	**Extirpated**	**Endangered**	**Threatened**	**Special concern**	**Total**
June 2003 (proclamation)	17	107	67	42	**233**
2005	4	47	30	31	**112**
2006	0	18	14	12	**44**
2007	0	20	5	11	**36**
2008	0	0	0	0	**0**
2009	0	8	3	11	**22**
2010	0	11*	8	4	**23***
2011	2	7	4	10	**23**
2012	0	11	2	5	**18**
Total*	**23**	**229**	**133**	**126**	**510†**

* The Eastern Foxsnake was split into two populations. The new populations inherited the species' status on Schedule 1 of SARA before it was split, and both new populations were uplisted in 2010. For the purpose of this table, one of the new Eastern Foxsnake populations was treated as an addition to Schedule 1.

† Although the total number of listed species (510) is correct, the total listed as endangered and threatened may be slightly off, because the values presented in this table do not reflect status changes (i.e., uplisting or downlisting of a species).

Table 5: Number of species listed on Schedule 1 by department/agency responsible for recovery planning, as of December 2012

	Environment Canada	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Parks Canada Agency	Total
Terrestrial mammals	27	–	4	**31**
Aquatic mammals	–	22	–	**22**
Birds	70	–	3	**73**
Reptiles	34	1	5	**40**
Amphibians	20	–	1	**21**
Fishes	–	66	–	**66**
Molluscs	5	14	2	**21**
Arthropods	33	–	4	**37**
Plants	122	–	52	**174**
Lichens	9	–	1	**10**
Mosses	11	–	4	**15**
Total	**331**	**103**	**76**	**510**

3 PROTECTION MEASURES FOR LISTED SPECIES

3.1 Legislative Background

The protection that comes into effect following the addition of a species to Schedule 1 of SARA depends on the type of species (e.g., migratory bird, aquatic species), its listed status (endangered, threatened, special concern) and its location.

Sections 32 and 33 of SARA make it an offence to:

- kill, harm, harass, capture or take an individual of a species that is listed as extirpated, endangered or threatened;
- possess, collect, buy, sell or trade an individual of a species that is listed as extirpated, endangered or threatened, or any of its parts or derivatives; or
- damage or destroy the residence of one or more individuals of a species that is listed as endangered or threatened, or of a species listed as extirpated if a recovery strategy has recommended its reintroduction into the wild in Canada.

These prohibitions apply automatically to listed aquatic species and to listed migratory birds protected under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* wherever they are found in Canada, and to all other endangered, threatened or extirpated species when found on federal lands in a province or lands under the authority of the Minister of the Environment in a territory.[4]

Provinces and territories have the primary responsibility to protect other listed species on provincial, territorial and private land. If the Minister of the Environment is of the opinion that the provincial or territorial legislation does not effectively protect the individuals of a species, their residences or their critical habitat, the Minister is required, after consultation with the appropriate provincial or territorial minister or if applicable, the wildlife management board, to recommend to the Governor in Council that an order be made to apply the general prohibitions in sections 32 and 33 of SARA.

4. Under SARA, "federal land" includes, but is not limited to, Canada's territorial sea and internal waters, national parks, military training areas, national wildlife areas, some migratory bird sanctuaries, and First Nations' reserve lands.

3.2 Emergency Orders

Under section 29 of SARA, if the Minister of the Environment, after consultation with every other competent minister, is of the opinion that there is an imminent threat to the survival of a wildlife species, the Minister must recommend to the Governor in Council on an emergency basis that the species be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as an endangered species. Upon receipt of such a recommendation, the Governor in Council determines whether or not the species will be added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk as an endangered species.

The Minister of the Environment received emergency assessments of three bat species (Little Brown Myotis, Tri-colored Bat and Northern Myotis) from COSEWIC in February 2012, which will be reviewed along with any other relevant information. To date, no species have been added to the List of Wildlife Species at Risk on an emergency basis.

Under section 80 of SARA, the Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the competent minister, make an emergency order to provide for the protection of a listed wildlife species or its habitat on federal lands and on non-federal lands. Applications for judicial review seeking an order to compel the Minister to make a recommendation to the Governor in Council that there is an imminent threat to the survival or recovery of particular species have been brought before the Federal Court. As of 2012, no emergency orders had been issued.

3.3 Permits

Sections 73 to 78 of SARA address agreements, permits, licences, orders and other instruments that authorize activities that otherwise would be offences under the Act. If all reasonable alternatives have been considered, all feasible measures have been taken to minimize the impact of the activity, and the survival or recovery of the species is not jeopardized, the competent minister may enter into an agreement or issue a permit under SARA for the following activities:

- scientific research related to conserving a listed species, conducted by qualified persons;
- activities that benefit a listed species or enhance its chances of survival in the wild; or
- activities that incidentally affect a listed species.

As part of the *Jobs, Growth and Long-Term Prosperity Act*, which was passed by Parliament in 2012, amendments were made to the SARA provisions that authorize otherwise-prohibited activities. Previously, these authorizations were limited to three years for permits, or five years for agreements, and the conditions of granting an authorization were not directly enforceable.

SARA was amended to:

- allow for long-term authorizations, with enforceable conditions of permits for activities affecting a listed species at risk, and
- specify that regulations made pursuant to ss.73(10) may include provisions to establish timelines for the issuance, renewal or refusal of SARA permits.

With longer durations, authorizations can be issued for a time period better suited to large projects and can be aligned with provincial or territorial permits, where appropriate. The amendments that allow timelines to be set in regulation will ensure a consistent and predictable approach with respect to timelines for issuing and renewing permits.

SARA authorization requests will continue to be evaluated to determine what risk the proposed activity poses to protected species and if the activity can be authorized without jeopardizing the survival or recovery of species at risk.

Environment Canada, the Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada issued a total of 181 SARA permits in 2012 for purposes of research, conservation and monitoring of listed species.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada issued 130 permits covering at least 27 listed aquatic species in 2012. These permits were only issued after the Department had determined that the survival of the species would not be jeopardized. Fisheries technicians, consultants, researchers and environmental scientists are among those who received permits in 2012.

In 2012, Environment Canada issued 33 permits to allow for the monitoring, inventory or management

of 77 species, including reptiles, amphibians, birds, vascular plants, arthropods, molluscs, mosses, mammals and lichens. Of the 33 permits issued, 12 were for scientific research related to the conservation of a species, 3 were for activities benefiting a species or required to enhance its chance of survival in the wild, 10 were for activities that may incidentally affect a species, and 8 were for more than one of these three purposes.

In 2012, the Parks Canada Agency issued 18 SARA permits. Of these, 15 permits covering at least 12 listed species were issued to academic and government researchers as well as Parks Canada scientists, for conservation research affecting species at risk, including inventory, population monitoring, habitat use and restoration, and conservation genetics. The remaining 3 permits were for activities that may incidentally affect a listed species. The Parks Canada Agency maintains an online research permitting system to enhance services to researchers, and to ensure that the Agency is informed of research being conducted in the protected heritage places network. The system incorporates a mandatory peer-review mechanism that ensures that SARA requirements are considered for every permitted research activity.

Explanations for all permits issued under the Act by Environment Canada, the Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada are posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry at www.sararegistry.gc.ca/sar/permit/permits_e.cfm.

3.4 Conservation Agreements

A competent minister may, after consultation with the other competent minister and with the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council or any of its members, enter into a conservation agreement with any government in Canada, organization or person, to benefit a species at risk or enhance its survival in the wild.

The agreement must provide for the taking of conservation measures and any other measures consistent with the purposes of SARA, and may include measures with respect to:

- monitoring the status of the species;
- developing and implementing educational and public awareness programs;
- developing and implementing recovery strategies, action plans and management plans;
- protecting the species' habitat, including its critical habitat; or
- undertaking research projects in support of recovery efforts for the species.

Conservation agreements can also be entered into to provide for the conservation of a wildlife species that is not a species at risk.

The competent departments continued work to develop the first conservation agreements under SARA. These will be with First Nations in British Columbia, Ontario and Prince Edward Island.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada also continued to advance the development of a draft conservation agreement for the endangered mollusc Hotwater Physa.

3.5 Compliance Promotion

SARA recognizes that Canada's natural heritage is an integral part of our national identity and history. All Canadians have a role to play in the conservation of wildlife species and their habitats, and public involvement through education and awareness is essential to maintaining an effective compliance and enforcement program.

Officials from Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Parks Canada Agency continue working together to promote compliance with the Act, ensuring that Canadians are informed about SARA and their responsibilities under the Act. Offences committed under SARA can lead to legal proceedings.

Environment Canada is tasked with ensuring compliance with SARA for migratory birds throughout Canada and for terrestrial species that are found on federal lands within Canada (other than lands under the authority of Parks Canada).

Information to support compliance promotion activities was shared within the Department and with federal and provincial partners. Environment Canada also delivered information in the form of fact sheets, Qs and As, Web content, information sessions and others to educate communities and the public about activities that affect species at risk and their habitat.

Environment Canada also provided information sessions for Aboriginal and stakeholder communities, as well as signage, area-user brochures and volunteer guardian programs.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada continued working with partners to educate Canadians on the threats to aquatic species at risk, how they can help protect these species and their responsibility under SARA. Departmental staff visited schools, organized workshops, and attended trade shows, festivals and community meetings. Some highlights include:

- promoting and teaching Canadians about the "Be Whale Wise" initiative, a guideline for viewing marine mammals from a safe and responsible distance;
- educating boat operators, including kayakers and fishing lodge staff across the country, about the importance of recording and reporting species at risk catches in their logbooks and the quick and safe release of these species during coastal and in-port patrols; and
- holding information sessions with Aboriginal groups and commercial fishers to increase awareness of SARA, its processes, current listed species and species being considered for listing under SARA.

The Parks Canada Agency promotes compliance with SARA through public engagement in efforts to mitigate the factors that adversely affect the protection and recovery of species at risk. In 2012, the Agency continued to implement the Parks Canada Prevention Guidelines, which support the implementation of activities promoting awareness and understanding of species at risk and their habitat.

3.6 Enforcement

Environment Canada, the Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada jointly enforce SARA. These federal entities work in partnership with Aboriginal, provincial, territorial and international authorities to preserve and protect SARA-listed wildlife species at risk and their critical habitats. More information regarding the applicability of SARA prohibitions (see sections 3.1 and 5.1) can be found on the Species at Risk Public Registry website at http://sararegistry.gc.ca/involved/you/default_e.cfm.

3.6.1 Enforcement Capacity

Environment Canada enforces four statutes that protect wildlife:

- the *Species at Risk Act*;
- the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*;
- the *Canada Wildlife Act*; and
- the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act*.

This suite of legislation is aimed at protecting and conserving wildlife species and their habitats. To ensure the effective enforcement of these Acts, wildlife officers work in close cooperation with national and international partners. In 2012, Environment Canada had a staff of 87 enforcement officers assigned to enforce these Acts.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's enforcement actions for species at risk are carried out by 511 front-line fishery officers who have been trained and designated as enforcement officers under SARA and who incorporate SARA enforcement activities into their duties under the *Fisheries Act* and other federal statutes and regulations.

Parks Canada's Law Enforcement Program has been in operation since May 2009. Park wardens enforce legislation related to Parks Canada's mandate, including SARA, on all lands and waters that the Agency administers. In 2012, the contingent of park wardens dedicated to law enforcement activities included 87 positions located in the Agency's protected heritage areas.

3.6.2 Enforcement Activities

Enforcement activities under SARA include patrolling protected areas, investigating alleged violations, and assuring compliance through court action. Penalties for contraventions of the Act include fines, imprisonment, alternative measures agreements, and forfeiture of proceeds from illegal activities.

Each year, Environment Canada prioritizes its enforcement activities. In 2012, SARA enforcement activities continued to focus on three national priorities:

- Legal obligations: a legal obligation to investigate exists under section 93 of SARA. It comes into play when receiving a public request that an investigation be carried out concerning an alleged offence involving SARA-listed species, their critical habitat or residence.
- Commercial activities: these involve commercial/industrial activities that may entail the incidental take of SARA-listed species.
- The protection of critical habitat on federal lands: critical habitat is the habitat deemed necessary for the survival and recovery of species listed under SARA.

In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada fishery officers dedicated over 19 000 hours to patrols, inspections, investigations, court cases, public relations and other duties related to enforcing the prohibitions of SARA.

3.6.2.1 Enforcement Tracking and Intelligence

Environment Canada's Wildlife Intelligence Program has a regional intelligence officer for each region and a national intelligence unit. Regional intelligence officers are mainly involved in the collection of operational and tactical intelligence that supports the investigation and inspection programs. The national unit focuses on strategic intelligence and analysis to determine national and international trends in illegal activities related to wildlife species.

In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada reported 45 SARA violations that resulted in fines, seizures, charges and warnings for the offenders. These offences were entered into the fisheries Enforcement Activity Tracking System, a state-of-the-art tracking system that continues to help the Department increase its efficiency in tracking, monitoring, identifying and charging individuals, groups or companies who violate the SARA prohibitions.

The Parks Canada Agency tracks enforcement activities through the Occurrence Tracking System. In 2012, park wardens recorded a total of eight law enforcement occurrences related to the protection of species at risk and enforcement of the Act in protected heritage areas. There were no charges or prosecutions under the prohibitions of SARA during this period.

3.6.2.2 Inspections

Environment Canada's inspection efforts target areas where detecting violations of the law will have the most positive impacts on conservation. These efforts fall under the three national priorities described in section 3.6.2 above. Human activities can have an impact on SARA-listed species, and can result in violations related to habitat destruction, illegal capture, poaching, removal from the wild or disturbance of residences. Environment Canada enforcement officers conducted 33 inspections in 2012.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada conducts regular and targeted inspections to ensure that individuals, groups and companies are complying with legislation that protects species at risk (e.g., SARA, *Fisheries Act*). In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada carried out inspections of groundfish catches for any incidental catch of Northern, Atlantic or Spotted Wolffish. All logbooks, whether for groundfish, large pelagic, tuna, etc., are reviewed for any species at risk. Fish processing plants, wholesale enterprises, retail businesses and airports were also inspected for illegal possession or harvesting of Northern Abalone and shark fin.

A number of fixed-wing patrols over the 2012 field season included the Beluga Hunt areas of Cumberland Sound to assess for hunting activity, struck and lost animals, and entrapment (high tide/low tide).

Inspections of cargos, containers and fish shipments that could be used to smuggle species at risk are often carried out in partnership with other agencies, such as the Canada Border Services Agency and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Several inspections have led to investigations regarding the illegal possession of Northern Abalone meat and shells with intent to sell or illegal harvesting activities.

3.6.2.3 Investigations

Investigations are an important part of officers' enforcement work in cases where noncompliance has been discovered. Officers use a number of tools, such as verbal and written warnings, tickets, arrests, seizures, and court-directed fines, to ensure offenders become compliant with laws that protect species at risk.

In 2012, Environment Canada conducted six investigations involving critical habitats and regulated species under SARA, such as Butternut, Wild American Ginseng and Sea Otter. Some of these investigations are ongoing. Others have resulted in no enforcement action being taken as there was insufficient evidence to do so.

Environment Canada publishes the outcomes of its main investigations on its website. Media releases and enforcement notifications are available at www.ec.gc.ca/alef-ewe/default.asp?lang=En&n=8F711F37-1.

In 2012, fishery officers performed 74 SARA-related investigations that led to verbal or written warnings, tickets or arrests, seizures, or court-directed fines. One investigation in Vancouver led to the conviction of an individual for illegal possession of 280 kilograms of frozen Northern Abalone. The individual was ordered to pay a $40,000 fine, $35,000 of which was directed to Fisheries and Oceans Canada to fund research on illegal trafficking and distribution of Northern Abalone. Illegal harvest and trade remains one of the greatest threats to Northern Abalone.

Conviction for Harassing an Endangered Species

On September 27, 2012, a recreational boater was convicted in provincial court in Campbell River, British Columbia, on two counts of harassing and disturbing Killer Whales, under both the *Fisheries Act's Marine Mammal Regulations*, which specifically prohibit any disturbance of marine mammals, and the *Species at Risk Act*, which makes it illegal to harass a member of a wildlife species that is listed as extirpated, endangered or threatened. This is the first time that an individual has been found guilty of harassing orcas under the *Species at Risk Act*.

Sentencing has yet to take place, but violations can result in significant fines and penalties, from a maximum of $250,000 under *Species at Risk Act* legislation to $100,000 under the *Marine Mammal Regulations*.

The charges arose from an incident on August 3, 2010, when fishery officers on patrol in the waters around Quadra Island near Campbell River observed a recreational power boat repeatedly accelerating towards two Killer Whales as they surfaced and then dove. The boat eventually powered up behind the orcas, at a distance of 15 to 25 metres away from the animals. This is contrary to the long-established whale-watching guidelines in Canada, which state a minimum distance of 100 metres should be maintained between vessels and orcas.

British Columbia's two resident killer whale populations are listed as endangered (southern residents) and threatened (northern residents) under the *Species at Risk Act*. The Resident Killer Whale Recovery Strategy identifies physical and acoustic vessel disturbance as a potential threat to their recovery.

Killer Whales.
© Graeme Ellis

4 RECOVERY PLANNING FOR LISTED SPECIES

4.1 Legislative Background

A wide range of measures are required for the recovery of species at risk. Under SARA, the competent ministers must prepare recovery strategies and action plans for species listed as extirpated, endangered or threatened. Recovery strategies identify threats to the species and its habitat, identify critical habitat to the extent possible, and set population and distribution objectives for the species. Action plans outline the actions to be taken to meet the objectives in the recovery strategy. Management plans include measures for species listed as special concern.

Table 6 shows the required timelines for developing recovery strategies and management plans. The timelines for developing action plans are set within the recovery strategies. Posting of SARA recovery documents is the responsibility of the federal competent minister for the species; however, they must be developed, to the extent possible, in cooperation and consultation with all relevant jurisdictions and directly affected parties. Where provincial and territorial governments prepare recovery planning documents, the federal government prefers to adopt them under SARA; in these cases, the federal government may include an addition to ensure that SARA's requirements for recovery documents are met.

Proposed recovery strategies, action plans and management plans are posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry for a 60-day public comment period. The competent ministers consider comments and make changes where appropriate. The final documents are to be posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry within 30 days of the close of the public comment period. Five years after a recovery strategy, action plan or management plan comes into effect, the competent minister must report on progress made toward the stated objectives.

Table 6: Timeline for developing recovery documents (in years)

	Recovery strategy		Management plan
Species listing date	**Endangered**	**Threatened or extirpated**	**Special concern**
June 5, 2003	3	4	5
New listings after June 5, 2003	1	2	3
Reassessed Schedule 2 or 3 listings, after June 5, 2003	3	4	5

4.2 Recovery Planning

In 2012, the federal government continued its effort to improve and enable effective and consistent implementation of the federal Species at Risk Recovery Program. Environment Canada, the Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada collaborated to finalize revised templates and guidelines for the development of action plans, including guidance on evaluation of the socio-economic costs of an action plan and the benefits to be derived from its implementation. Work also included developing working definitions of recovery and survival, and laying policy groundwork for revising guidelines on setting population and distribution objectives.

Environment Canada's work to address the backlog of recovery documents has produced significant results. Building on considerable progress in 2010 and 2011, Environment Canada posted recovery documents for 47 species in 2012, and a large number of recovery documents have been drafted and are expected to be posted in the near future. Environment Canada has developed a new version of its Critical Habitat Identification Toolbox that offers recovery practitioners additional support in completing scientifically sound and well-documented identification of critical habitat. In addition, a training program addressing the new policy and guidance initiatives was developed for Environment Canada staff.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada made notable improvements in recovery planning over the past few years. The Department established, and is implementing, a robust national work planning process which includes the identification of recovery activities as a priority. In 2012, the department posted recovery documents covering 16 species on the SAR registry.

Parks Canada posted recovery planning documents for 12 species in 2012.

4.2.1 Recovery Strategies

A recovery strategy is a planning document that identifies what needs to be done to reverse the decline of a threatened or endangered species. It sets population and distribution objectives that will assist the recovery and survival of species, and identifies the threats to the species and its habitat and the main activities to address these threats. A single recovery strategy may address multiple species at risk. Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Parks Canada Agency use a multi-species/ecosystem-based approach for the recovery of species at risk where appropriate.

In 2012, all three competent departments continued to work on recovery strategies at various stages of development. Recovery strategies that were posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry are listed in Table 7.

On October 5, 2012, Environment Canada posted the final recovery strategy for the Woodland Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*), Boreal population in Canada on the Species at Risk Public Registry. The posting of the final recovery strategy for the Boreal population of the Woodland Caribou (i.e., boreal caribou) followed an extended public comment period from August 26, 2011, to February 22, 2012, on the proposed version of the recovery strategy. Environment Canada received over 19 000 comments on the proposed recovery strategy from Aboriginal communities and organizations, stakeholder groups, other governments, and the Canadian public. Comments touched on all sections of the proposed recovery strategy, although the majority focused on the population and distribution objectives, and the identification of critical habitat. The final recovery strategy includes an identification of critical habitat for all boreal caribou ranges across Canada, except for northern Saskatchewan's Boreal Shield range. As required under SARA, the final recovery strategy includes a schedule of studies to complete the identification of critical habitat. The final recovery strategy is based on the best available information from Aboriginal traditional knowledge and scientific studies, and outlines a practical and realistic way to recover Canada's boreal caribou.

Boreal caribou.
© John A. Nagy

Table 7: Number of recovery strategies posted in 2012, and the listed species at risk covered by them, by competent department

	Proposed recovery strategies		Final recovery strategies	
Competent department	**No.**	**Species covered**	**No.**	**Species covered**
Environment Canada	16	Allegheny Mountain Dusky Salamander (Great Lakes/St. Lawrence population) American Marten (Newfoundland population) Anticosti Aster Branched Phacelia Flooded Jellyskin Grand Coulee Owl-clover Gulf of St. Lawrence Aster Horned Grebe (Magdalen Islands population) Nugget Moss Pink Milkwort Piping Plover *melodus* subspecies Poweshiek Skipperling Rusty Cord-moss Sand-verbena Moth Southern Maidenhair Fern Van Brunt's Jacob's-ladder	25	Acadian Flycatcher Anticosti Aster Blunt-lobed Woodsia Branched Phacelia Burrowing Owl Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid Fernald's Braya Grand Coulee Owl-clover Gulf of St. Lawrence Aster Hooded Warbler King Rail Long's Braya Maritime Ringlet Nugget Moss Ord's Kangaroo Rat Piping Plover *melodus* subspecies Poweshiek Skipperling Rusty Cord-moss Sand-verbena Moth Showy Goldenrod Skinner's Agalinis Slender Mouse-ear-cress Small-flowered Sand-verbena Van Brunt's Jacob's-ladder Victorin's Gentian White Prairie Gentian Woodland Caribou (Boreal population) ***Total of 27 species covered**
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	8	Copper Redhorse Eastern Sand Darter (Ontario population) Northern Madtom Pugnose Shiner Rocky Mountain Sculpin (Eastslope populations) Salish Sucker Shortnose Cisco Spotted Gar	7	Beluga Whale (St. Lawrence Estuary population) Copper Redhorse Eastern Sand Darter (Ontario population) Northern Madtom Rocky Mountain Sculpin (Eastslope populations) Shortnose Cisco Spotted Gar
Parks Canada Agency	6	Dense Spike-primrose Foothill Sedge White Meconella Coast Microseris Fragrant Popcornflower Lindley's False Silverpuffs	5	Eastern Ribbonsnake – Atlantic population Blanding's Turtle – Nova Scotia population Baikal Sedge Common Hoptree Rayless Goldfields

4.2.2 Identification of Critical Habitat

SARA defines "critical habitat" as the habitat that is necessary for the survival or recovery of a listed wildlife species. Competent ministers must identify critical habitat to the extent possible, based on the best available information, in recovery strategies and action plans. Environment Canada, the Parks Canada Agency, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada continued to work with government and non-government stakeholders to address policy development, intergovernmental responsibilities and the science associated with identifying critical habitat.

Building on the progress made in previous years, Environment Canada identified critical habitat for 24 species in final recovery documents during the 2012 calendar year. Critical habitat was also identified for an additional 6 species in proposed documents that were posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry.

In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada posted recovery strategies with identified critical habitat for four aquatic species: Spotted Gar, Eastern Sand Darter (Ontario population), Pugnose Shiner and Rocky Mountain Sculpin. A new proposed recovery strategy, with identified critical habitat, has been developed for the Channel Darter and is expected to be posted in 2013. The Department has also revised recovery strategies for seven other species (Snuffbox, Kidneyshell, Round Hickorynut, Northern Riffleshell, Round Pigtoe, Salamander Mussel and Rayed Bean) to include critical habitat following years of research.

In 2012, the Parks Canada Agency identified critical habitat in final recovery strategies for five species: Baikal Sedge, Blanding's Turtle (Nova Scotia population), Eastern Ribbonsnake (Atlantic population), Common Hoptree and Rayless Goldfields. The Agency also identified critical habitat for six species in proposed recovery strategies posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry: Dense Spike-primrose, Foothill Sedge, White Meconella, Coast Microseris, Fragrant Popcornflower and Lindley's False Silverpuffs.

Critical habitat of the Northern Saw-whet Owl, *brooksi* subspecies

The Northern Saw-whet Owl is widespread in North America, but a subspecies of this tiny owl (the *brooksi* subspecies) is limited to the Haida Gwaii archipelago off the coast of British Columbia. The *brooksi* owls have some interesting habits, such as foraging in the intertidal zone of the coastline during winter, but little is known of what habitat is critical to their survival and recovery. Since 2010, Parks Canada and the Province of British Columbia have been studying the *brooksi* subspecies with a primary objective to gather sufficient information to allow detailed mapping of habitat use. To date, the project has captured and tagged 40 owls on Haida Gwaii, and put radio transmitters on birds in both summer and winter, allowing for mapping of their home range usage in both seasons. This will result in better critical habitat maps over the coming years as data collected is analyzed.

Northern Saw-whet Owl, *brooksi* subspecies, with a standard leg band used for identification if recaptured or otherwise recovered.

© Parks Canada, Photo: Ross Vennesland

4.2.3 Action Plans

An action plan identifies the conservation measures required to meet the population and distribution objectives outlined in the recovery strategy. An action plan may also identify critical habitat or complete the identification of critical habitat if it is not fully identified in the recovery strategy. An action plan also includes information on measures proposed to protect that critical habitat, methods proposed to monitor the recovery of the species, and an evaluation of the socio-economic costs of the action plan and benefits to be derived from its implementation.

In 2012, Environment Canada posted final action plans for one species (Red Crossbill *percna* subspecies) on the Species at Risk Public Registry.

Parks Canada is developing site-based multi-species action plans that will prioritize conservation actions for the suite of species at risk found in Parks Canada heritage places. In 2012, Parks Canada completed guidance for the development of site-based action plans. When possible, these will take an ecosystem-based approach, and in some cases will include lands outside of heritage places. In 2012, Parks Canada continued the development of nine multi-species action plans.

In 2012, the Action Plan for the Northern Abalone in Canada was finalized and posted on the SARA registry. Fisheries and Oceans Canada also conducted regional consultations on a number of draft action plans for species including Nooksack Dace, Salish Sucker and Cultus Pygmy Sculpin.

4.2.4 Management Plans

Species of special concern are those that may become threatened or endangered because of a combination of biological characteristics and identified threats. Under SARA, management plans are prepared for species of special concern, rather than recovery strategies and action plans.

A management plan differs from a recovery strategy and an action plan in that it identifies conservation measures needed to prevent a species of special concern from becoming threatened or endangered. Where appropriate, these management plans will be prepared for multiple species on an ecosystem or landscape level.

In 2012, all three competent departments continued to develop management plans. The management plans that were posted on the Species at Risk Public Registry in 2012 are listed in Table 8.

Table 8: Number of management plans posted in 2012, and the listed species at risk covered by them, by competent department

	Proposed management plans		Final management plans	
Competent department	**No.**	**Species covered**	**No.**	**Species covered**
Environment Canada	9	American Hart's-tongue Fern Flammulated Owl Great Plains Toad Long-billed Curlew Northern Leopard Frog (Western Boreal/Prairie populations) Prototype Quillwort Pygmy Snaketail Swamp Rose-mallow Yellow Rail	5	Columbian Carpet Moss Cryptic Paw Lichen Louisiana Waterthrush Prototype Quillwort Woodland Caribou (Northern Mountain population)
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	2*	Bluntnose Sixgill Shark Longspine Thornyhead Rougheye Rockfish type I Rougheye Rockfish type II Tope	4*	Bluntnose Sixgill Shark Columbia Sculpin Grass Pickerel Longspine Thornyhead Rougheye Rockfish type I Rougheye Rockfish type II Tope
Parks Canada Agency	1	Hill's Pondweed	0	

* It is possible that the number of plans completed may be different than the number of species covered. A plan can cover more than one species.

5 RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Protection of Critical Habitat

SARA requires that all critical habitat identified in a recovery strategy or action plan be protected against destruction. This includes critical habitat located in the exclusive economic zone or on the continental shelf of Canada.

In 2012, Environment Canada developed an approach to facilitate the assessment of critical habitat protection on federal lands and continued to engage a number of federal departments in discussions on issues related to the protection of critical habitat on lands under federal authority. In addition, a risk management approach was developed to augment the critical habitat effective protection assessment process developed in 2010 in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments. Efforts to formalize other aspects of critical habitat protection on lands under the administration of Environment Canada, other federal departments, and provincial and territorial governments are ongoing.

In 2012, the Agency protected critical habitat for four species in four of its protected heritage areas: Dwarf Hackberry (Point Pelee National Park of Canada), Bolander's Quillwort (Waterton Lakes National Park of Canada), Burrowing Owl (Grasslands National Park of Canada) and Baikal Sedge (Kluane National Park of Canada). Efforts are ongoing to finalize protection measures for critical habitat of other species on lands administered by the Agency.

The provinces and territories are primarily responsible for the management of non-federal lands, natural resources and wildlife located on those lands. This includes the protection of the critical habitat of species at risk on non-federal lands (other than aquatic species) and implementation of protection measures through their own legislation and programs. The critical habitat prohibitions set out in subsection 61[5] of SARA only apply to non-federal lands when the Governor in Council makes an order, commonly referred to as a safety-net order. The Minister may only recommend a safety-net order to the Governor in Council if there are no other federal laws that will protect and if the Minister is of the opinion that the laws of the province or territory do not effectively protect a species' critical habitat.

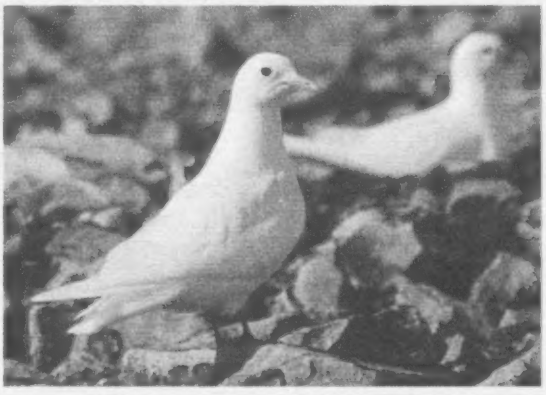
5. Subsection 61(1) of SARA states that no person shall destroy any part of the critical habitat of a listed endangered species or a listed threatened species that is in a province or territory and that is not part of federal lands (see http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-15.3/page-15.html).

5.2 Recovery Activities

5.2.1 Competent Departments' Recovery Activities

In 2012, Environment Canada biologists across Canada continued to lead and support activities, including research projects, education and awareness, habitat restoration and enhancement initiatives, monitoring, assessment, and more. These activities supported the recovery of numerous species at risk from a wide variety of taxa.

For example, the endangered Ivory Gull is a circumpolar species with a small breeding population in northern Canada. Location data obtained through the use of satellite telemetry has provided information about previously unknown nesting areas, unknown or unconfirmed routes, and timing of seasonal migrations. The data also revealed that a large proportion of the global population may winter in Canadian waters in the north Atlantic Ocean close to a proposed all-season shipping route for an area of high marine traffic, which is anticipated to include all-season shipping in the near future.



Ivory Gull photographed in the breeding colony at the Seymour Island Migratory Bird Sanctuary.
© Mark Mallory

Beyond our borders: working with partners to identify Piping Plover wintering areas

Up until the winter of 2011, the whereabouts of endangered Piping Plovers during the non-breeding season had mostly been a mystery, with only 40% to 60% of breeding Piping Plovers ever accounted for in the winter. Thanks to an international collaboration involving biologists from Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service, the Bahamas has been discovered as the second most important wintering site for Piping Plover.

Islands in the Bahamas were surveyed during the 2011 International Piping Plover Census, which has occurred every five years since 1991. Over a thousand birds were counted; a considerable increase from earlier counts, reflective of survey effort (1991: 19 birds; 1996: 25 birds; 2001: 35 birds; 2006: 417 birds). The discovery of concentrations of Piping Plover in the Bahamas is very exciting, and identification of this significant wintering area helps fill an important knowledge gap. Uncovering key wintering sites enables identification of potential threats and will help direct conservation initiatives that, to date, have focused primarily on threats to the species on its breeding grounds.

In 2012, Environment Canada continued to work with colleagues at the Bahamas National Trust, the National Audubon Society, Bird Studies Canada, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Geological Survey to support Piping Plover conservation initiatives in the Bahamas.

In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada led or supported a number of activities aimed at protecting and recovering aquatic species at risk. These activities are diverse in range and scope, such as scientific research projects for enhancement of critical habitat, developing compliance and enforcement tools, and education and awareness.

For example, incidental capture in commercial fisheries has been identified as the primary source of human-induced mortality for wolffish. Fisheries and Oceans Canada increased patrols and deployed fishery officers to verify if incidental captures of wolffish are being properly handled and the wolffish quickly released. Random verifications were also conducted at landing stations and plants for illegal capture of wolffish.

A number of studies were also conducted by Fisheries and Oceans Canada scientists to gain a better understanding of the life stages of many aquatic species at risk. For example, a survey was undertaken to fill out information gaps on the distribution of the Northern Madtom in Lake St. Clair. Another study looked at larval drift and timing as well as habitat preference for the Nechako River population of White Sturgeon.

Saving a Humpback Calf

On September 3, 2012, a British Columbia Marine Mammal Response Network member, who operates Rendevous Dive Charters in Barkely Sound, was taking a group out for a dive when they encountered a humpback whale mother and calf pair. The group noticed that the calf was encumbered with a mass of commercial crab floats. The line around the tail stock was cutting deeply into the animal, and the calf was struggling. The 24-hour Fisheries and Oceans Canada Marine Mammal Response Program incident hotline was immediately called and the expert rapid response whale disentanglement team was put into action. Within two hours, conservation and protection officers were on the water searching for the entangled whale. After several hours of searching, the entangled calf and mother were located. It took over three hours of intense effort to remove all the gear from the calf. The 45-foot mother humpback stayed directly beside the calf for the entire rescue effort. Although the wounds from the entangled gear were significant, it is believed that the calf will make a full recovery. Researchers will be using fluke identification photographs to follow the progress of the calf for many years to come.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada marine mammal response team member cuts away commercial crab gear to free the humpback whale calf.

© Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Reintroduction of the Pink Sand-verbena

Pink Sand-verbena is a globally rare plant and one of the rarest species in Canada. Historically, it was known in three locations in Canada, all on the stormy west coast of Vancouver Island. For many years, Pink Sand-verbena was thought to be extirpated because it had not been observed since the 1940s, but in 2001, it was found on the West Coast Trail of Pacific Rim National Park Reserve (PRNPR). This was exciting because it allowed Parks Canada ecologists, in partnership with local naturalists, to collect seed and start growing seedlings in a greenhouse for translocation to the wild. Restoration efforts have been underway for five years to bring the highly endangered Pink Sand-verbena back from the brink of extirpation in Canada.

Although it is too early to say if the species will persist, 2012 was an exciting year for the project. Restoration efforts at Wickaninnish Beach were wildly successful, with hundreds of plants flourishing and creating thousands of seeds for the local seedbank. It is expected that some plants will survive over the winter, which would be an encouraging sign that restoration efforts at this site will be successful. In addition, Parks Canada partnered with Huu-ay-aht First Nation, to begin work at a third restoration location at Keeha Beach on Treaty Settlement Lands owned by the Huu-ay-aht First Nation. Parks Canada is grateful to Huu-ay-aht First Nation for their support and participation in restoration efforts because some of the best habitat for the species is at Keeha Beach. With the restoration efforts started at Keeha Beach in 2012, Parks Canada has now reached the recovery strategy objective of establishing three populations, an important milestone on the road to bringing this fragile species back from the brink.

Members of the Pink Sand-verbena restoration team of Pacific Rim National Park Reserve planting seedlings of this endangered plant at Keeha Beach near Bamfield, British Columbia.

© Parks Canada, Photo: Ross Vennesland

In 2012, the Parks Canada Agency continued to implement recovery activities in and around protected heritage places, including research, restoration activities, and public outreach and education. The Parks Canada approach integrates public and stakeholder involvement with direct recovery actions.

Several Parks Canada projects are conducted in partnership with non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, private citizens and Aboriginal communities. In 2012, in national parks across Canada, approximately 560 volunteers recorded over 10 000 hours dedicated to projects related to species at risk, such as the year-round Garry Oak ecosystem restoration volunteer program that is achieving real outcomes on the conservation front, helping remove invasive species, restoring habitats or contributing to species reintroduction. These volunteer projects also contribute to connecting Canadians to Parks Canada's protected heritage areas.

5.2.2 Other Recovery Activities

5.2.2.1 Habitat Stewardship Program

The federal Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP) for Species at Risk was established in 2000 as part of the National Strategy for the Protection of Species at Risk. The program's goal is to engage Canadians in conservation actions that contribute to the recovery of species at risk, with priority given to endangered and threatened SARA-listed species. Funded projects focus on these four expected results:

- securing or protecting important habitat for the recovery of species at risk;
- improving, through restoration/enhancement, or managing important habitat to meet the recovery needs of species at risk;
- removing or mitigating threats to species at risk caused by human activities; and/or
- engaging Canadians (landowners, resource users, volunteers) to participate directly in activities that support the recovery of species at risk so that project benefits are sustained over time.

The HSP is co-managed by Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Parks Canada Agency, and administered by Environment Canada on a regional basis. Regional implementation boards include representatives from the two federal departments and the Agency, provincial and territorial governments, and other stakeholders where appropriate. These boards provide advice on program direction such as priorities and project selection for their regions. Further information on the program is available at www.ec.gc.ca/hsp-pih. Since its inception, the HSP has contributed over $117 million to 2047 projects, leveraging an additional $287 million in matching funds from project partners.

During the twelfth year of the program (2011–2012), 195 new projects and 13 previously approved multi-year projects, involving 151 funding recipients, contributed to the recovery of over 330 SARA-listed species across Canada. A total of $11.5 million in funding was awarded to these projects, and an additional $25.9 million was leveraged from partners, for a total investment of $37.4 million. These contributions provided support to stewardship efforts across Canada that resulted in the securement and protection of 364 142 hectares (ha) of land, including 7562 ha through legally binding means, such as acquisition or conservation easements. Non-binding protection accounts for 356 580 ha, and covers 322 647 ha through renewed stewardship agreements and 33 933 ha through new stewardship agreements to conserve land. The program also supported the improvement or restoration of 14 511 ha of land and 49 km of shoreline.

Riparian habitat rehabilitation for species at risk in the South Okanagan and Similkameen Valley – The Nature Trust of British Columbia

In the South Okanagan and Lower Similkameen region of British Columbia, only 13% of the original riparian habitat of the endangered Yellow-breasted Chat, Western Screech-Owl and Tiger Salamander remains intact. The objective of this HSP-funded project was to protect and restore known nesting and breeding sites within these riparian ecosystems to provide recovery habitat for these listed species, among others.

Since degradation and disturbance of riparian habitat due to human activity are the main threats to the project's target species, project activities were cooperatively conducted on private lands, provincial Crown lands and First Nation Reserves where few other mechanisms for the protection of these habitats are available. By the time the project ended, 6 hectares of key riparian habitat had been protected and improved through the installation of 2 500 metres of fencing at five sites and the removal of invasive plants from six sites. Additionally, signage was installed at the project sites to raise public awareness of the recovery efforts taking place there. At the same time, previously unapproached landowners were contacted to encourage them to participate in recovering critical riparian habitat on their land on a voluntary basis.

The Nature Trust of British Columbia has been running the species at risk habitat rehabilitation program in the South Okanagan and Similkameen Valley for more than 10 years. Its success has been demonstrated in the number of project sites voluntarily provided by landowners and the amount of species at risk habitat protected. It has become so well known within the community that the Nature Trust cannot keep up with the number of landowners who are interested in protecting species at risk habitat on their lands. Throughout the 2011–2012 project, the detected presence of target species, including Yellow-breasted Chat, at the project sites was very encouraging. Comprehensive monitoring of vegetation and avian response to the project will guide future project sites and selected protection methods that will benefit the overall program.

5.2.2.2 Interdepartmental Recovery Fund

The Interdepartmental Recovery Fund (IRF) is administered by Environment Canada as part of the National Strategy for the Protection of Species at Risk. Established in 2002, the IRF supports federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations in their efforts to meet the requirements of SARA. Funded projects must predominantly occur on lands owned or administered by federal organizations other than the SARA competent departments and directly relate to the implementation of activities under recovery strategies or action plans, or surveys of species at risk. For survey and recovery projects, endangered or threatened SARA-listed species are given higher priority. Since 2009, the IRF has also supported activities that assist federal organizations in preparing high-quality proposals for surveys and recovery activities. More information is available at www.sararegistry.gc.ca/involved/funding/irf_fir/default_e.cfm.

During the IRF's first 10 years (2002–2012), it has invested $18 million in 596 projects. In 2011–2012, the IRF supported 41 projects totalling $1.34 million in support of the recovery of 122 species (see Table 9 for breakdown by federal agency). Of the total funds, 68% was applied to recovery actions, 29% to surveys and 3% to 1 planning project. Projects were implemented by 9 federal departments and 3 Crown corporations or agencies who collectively contributed an additional $1 091 968 (in-kind and cash) to the 2011–2012 projects. The projected allocation for the 2012–2013 fiscal year is $1.2 million.

Table 9: Interdepartmental Recovery Fund expenditures, by federal agency, in fiscal year 2011–2012

Lead organization	No. of projects	IRF ($)
Department of National Defence	8	273,627
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada	9	234,675
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	4	227,675
Environment Canada	4	191,750
Transport Canada	3	160,850
National Research Council Canada	6	62,988
Natural Resources Canada	1	49,350
Atomic Energy of Canada	2	38,000
National Capital Commission	1	37,920
Canadian Museum of Nature	1	30,000
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	1	15,000
Parks Canada Agency	1	13,400
Total	**41**	**1,335,235**

Recovery: experimental translocations of Ord's Kangaroo Rats – Department of National Defence

The Ord's Kangaroo Rat (*Dipodomys ordii*) is a small nocturnal rodent adapted to open-terrain habitat in arid regions. This species reaches the northern limit of its range in Canada, where it is isolated from the nearest populations in Montana by 270 km. Recent population viability analysis of the species in Alberta has revealed that two outlying populations in Alberta are at extreme risk of extirpation. The Ord's Kangaroo Rat is now recognized as endangered, both provincially under the Alberta *Wildlife Act* and federally under Canada's *Species at Risk Act*. These outlying populations live in the highest quality habitat in Alberta, but because of their limited size and extreme isolation from the nearest U.S. population, they have a low probability of survival in the near future unless it is possible to facilitate ecological "rescue" by way of translocation. Translocation involves the capture, transport and release or introduction of species from one location to another. While the effectiveness of translocation to curb this species' population decline has not been demonstrated, it has been identified as a viable management tool.

This IRF-funded project focused on a population of Ord's Kangaroo Rats at Canadian Forces Base Suffield in Alberta. The project objective was to experimentally translocate Ord's Kangaroo Rats from suitable source sites and monitor their response at target relocation sites within CFB Suffield using passive integrated transponder tags. Research on translocating Ord's Kangaroo Rats to suitable habitat is considered a medium-priority activity in the Recovery Strategy for the Ord's Kangaroo Rat in Canada. This study demonstrated a successful approach for the translocation of animals from source to target sites.

Ord's Kangaroo Rat.
© The Provincial Museum of Alberta

5.2.2.3 Aboriginal Funds for Species at Risk

The Aboriginal Funds for Species at Risk (AFSAR) program helps Aboriginal organizations and communities across Canada build capacity to participate in the conservation and recovery of species protected under SARA and species at risk designated by COSEWIC. The program also helps to protect and recover critical habitat or habitat important for species at risk on or near First Nations reserves or on land and waters traditionally used by Aboriginal peoples. The program is co-managed by Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Parks Canada Agency, with the support of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the guidance of national Aboriginal organizations. Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada share project administration responsibilities. Further information is available at http://sararegistry.gc.ca/involved/funding/faep-asrp_e.cfm.

Overall, since its inception in 2004, AFSAR has contributed nearly $20 million to 600 projects, leveraging an additional $13 million in matching funds from project partners. In the 2011–2012 fiscal year, AFSAR provided $3.2 million for 87 projects, of which approximately $1.04 million targeted aquatic species at risk. These projects leveraged additional funds that exceeded $2.6 million (cash and inkind). The projects involved 76 Aboriginal organizations and communities as recipients and benefited 186 SARA-listed species through increased Aboriginal awareness of species at risk and through the development of strategies, guidelines and practices or the completion of monitoring studies, surveys and inventories.

Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation species at risk inventory and capacity-building project

The goal of this initiative was to strengthen the long-term capacity of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, near Wiarton, Ontario, to implement recovery activities identified in a number of recovery strategies. This AFSAR-funded project contributed to the mitigation of threats to over 20 SARA-listed species at risk and their habitat through activities such as habitat improvement (e.g., invasive species removal, rerouting of trails away from sensitive habitat), education (elementary school visits, dissemination of stewardship materials) and outreach (natural and cultural heritage interpretation).

The Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation trained "Keepers of the Earth" volunteers in habitat restoration, field survey techniques, data recording, species monitoring and community outreach activities for species at risk, including endangered species (Butternut and Gattinger's Agalinis), threatened species (Blanding's Turtle, Hill's Thistle, Dwarf Lake Iris and Massasauga Rattlesnake), and species of special concern (Tuberous Indian-plantain and American Hart's-tongued Fern). Species at risk observations were documented and confirmed by the project coordinator.

Invasive species have been a significant threat to the species at risk on the Prairie Point Alvar, a limestone plain with little to no soil cover, located within the First Nation Reserve. In 2011–2012, following positive results of work supported through previous AFSAR funding on the removal of invasive plants, invasive White Sweet Clover was removed on one hectare of land on the Alvar. This work led to discussions between Chief and Council, the community and other experts to draft an Invasive Species Management and Restoration Plan. Implementation of recommendations in the plan began in 2012 on the Prairie Point Alvar.

Volunteer removing invasive White Sweet Clover at Prairie Point Alvar.

© Jarma Jalavo

This project has successfully increased community knowledge and engagement on this First Nation Reserve. Further, the growing awareness and participation by the community in this project has led to tangible results, where species at risk sightings are now regularly being reported in the project area.

5.2.2.4 Natural Areas Conservation Program

The Natural Areas Conservation Program (NACP) was created by the Government of Canada in 2007 with an investment of $225 million towards the long-term protection of more than 200 000 ha (half a million acres) containing diverse ecosystems, wildlife and natural habitat. The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) administers the NACP, and, in working with other non-profit, non-governmental conservation organizations, uses NACP funds to help secure full or partial interests in private lands across southern Canada containing significant ecologically sensitive natural areas.

Using a science-based process, the NCC and its partners work to acquire these lands through donation, purchase or stewardship agreements with private landowners. Under the NACP, priority is given to lands that are nationally or provincially significant, protect habitat for species at risk and migratory birds, or enhance connectivity or corridors between existing protected areas such as national wildlife areas, national parks and migratory bird sanctuaries.

The program has a 1:1 matching requirement, meaning that NCC must match each federally invested dollar with at least one of its own in combination with its partners. To date, the NCC and its partners, through a combination of matching funds, pledges and donations from private landowners, have invested more than $350 million in the program. As of December 2012, more than 354 000 ha of ecologically significant lands have

been acquired under the NACP. The land securement goal set out in the funding agreement has been surpassed as a result of the purchase of large properties or development rights over large areas. The NACP has also contributed to the protection of habitat for at least 146 different species at risk and to other elements of biodiversity.

5.2.2.5 Outreach and Education

SARA recognizes that all Canadians have a role to play in conserving wildlife, including preventing wildlife species from being extirpated or becoming extinct. The Act also recognizes that the conservation efforts of individual Canadians and communities should be encouraged, and that stewardship activities contributing to the conservation of wildlife species and their habitat should be supported to prevent species from becoming at risk. Stewardship and cooperation are encouraged through funding programs and joint programs for species at risk. Outreach constitutes an important component of projects receiving funding through the Species at Risk funding programs.

Environment Canada has continued educating Canadians about species at risk through its longstanding partnership with the Canadian Wildlife Federation in delivering the Hinterland Who's Who wildlife education program (www.hww.ca), and through developing and publishing species profiles on the Species at Risk Public Registry.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada continues to invest in key outreach and educational activities to better inform Canadians about aquatic species at risk and their responsibilities under SARA. For example, in 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada held several Aquatic Species at Risk Information Sessions in communities across southern Ontario. The objective was to improve community awareness and understanding of SARA; in particular, implications of critical habitat protection orders. All information sessions were held in collaboration with Ontario Conservation Authority staff. Total attendance exceeded 320 participants.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada also organized a three-day fisheries trade/SARA awareness workshop with enforcement staff from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The three days included some basic identification of species (both invasive and SARA-listed) and two half-day tours of fish markets in the Greater Toronto Area. The purpose was to educate enforcement staff on local seafood markets as a possible outlet for illegally harvested SARA species.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada carried out over 70 market probes in 2012, building intelligence on the markets. This collaborative effort allowed for both federal and provincial enforcement agencies to further their capacity, as well as to foster a strong foundation for future partnerships and information sharing regarding SARA species.

At Parks Canada, education and outreach activities relating to species at risk occur in and around heritage places at the local and regional levels, where an understanding of the species in the "backyard" of local communities and local national parks is appreciated.

At the national level, outreach efforts are focused on reaching audiences in urban areas that may not know Parks Canada or its challenges. In 2012, efforts included outreach to youth, families and new Canadians in Canada's three largest cities—Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver—and a few other urban areas across Canada. The objective was to make an initial connection with these audiences and build an understanding of the value of protected areas and some of the challenges they face, including the species at risk they protect. This leads to support for species at risk protection and management in Canada.

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation involves the examination of actions taken to ensure that conservation measures are on the right track and achieving recovery goals and objectives. Specifically, the objectives of monitoring and evaluation are to:

- detect changes in the conservation status of a species;
- determine the effectiveness of protection and recovery measures; and
- measure progress toward achieving recovery goals.

The following key principles guide the monitoring and evaluation process:

- The process should be based on reliable data. Specifically, the results of actions aimed at protection and recovery will be tracked and evaluated. The activities required to accomplish this tracking and evaluation will be incorporated into recovery documents.
- The process should reflect adaptive management principles. Recovery goals, objectives and measures will be reviewed in light of monitoring and evaluation results coupled with consideration of significant external factors (e.g., climatic changes). Protection and recovery measures will be adjusted or adapted to reflect new or changed circumstances in the environment and ecosystem within which species live.
- The process should lead to reassessment. When the situation of a species changes significantly enough to warrant reconsideration of its conservation status, this information will be communicated to the body responsible for species assessment.

6.1 Monitoring

Species at risk monitoring is ongoing within the Parks Canada heritage areas network to assess the long-term condition of species and to evaluate the results of recovery actions.

In 2012, Parks Canada completed 134 detailed assessments of species conservation status in protected heritage places as a baseline for future monitoring of the conservation status of each species at the heritage place level. As new information becomes available, it will be possible to update detailed assessments to determine changes in conservation status. This information contributes to site-based action plans that identify recovery activities and assists in determining progress towards achieving recovery goals.

6.2 SARA General Status Report

SARA requires that a general report on the status of wildlife species be prepared five years after section 128 comes into force (2003) and every five years thereafter. The report's purpose is to provide Canadians with an overview of which wild species are doing fine, which should be monitored and which need to be formally assessed or reassessed by COSEWIC. Reports entitled *Wild Species: The General Status of Species in Canada* (see section 2.1), prepared by a federal–provincial–territorial group of experts, serve as the basis to fulfill this requirement. In 2012, the Minister of Environment tabled the complete *Wild Species 2010* report to meet this requirement. Preparation of the next report, *Wild Species 2015*, is underway. The current report is available online at www.wildspecies.ca/wildspecies2010/default.cfm.

7 CONSULTATION AND GOVERNANCE

7.1 Ministers' Round Table

SARA requires that, at least every two years, the federal Minister of the Environment convene a round table of persons interested in matters respecting the protection of wildlife species at risk in Canada.

The fourth SARA round table was held in Ottawa on October 19, 2012, and involved representatives from Aboriginal groups, non-governmental organizations, industry associations and academia.

Diverse views were shared on what has worked well in the implementation of the Act, what some of the challenges have been, and opportunities for improvement, including ways to support collaborative approaches to species conservation.

7.2 Consultation with Aboriginal Groups and Other Stakeholders

7.2.1 National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk

SARA recognizes that the role of Aboriginal peoples in the conservation of wildlife is essential and that Aboriginal peoples possess unique traditional knowledge concerning wildlife species. The National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk (NACOSAR), composed of representatives of Aboriginal peoples

in Canada, was created under section 8.1 of SARA to advise the Minister of the Environment on the administration of the Act and to provide advice and recommendations to the Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council (see section 7.3.1).

In 2012, NACOSAR held several face-to-face meetings and teleconferences. The Council worked on renewing relationships and alliances, and in March met with the Honourable Peter Kent, Minister of the Environment. NACOSAR was invited to participate in the Ministerial Round Table and met jointly with the Species at Risk Advisory Committee (SARAC) and discussed items of mutual interest including permitting, conservation agreements, multi-species/ ecosystems approach, and Aboriginal involvement and Aboriginal traditional knowledge throughout SARA.

7.2.2 Species at Risk Advisory Committee

SARAC provides advice on the implementation of SARA to the Species at Risk Assistant Deputy Ministers' Committee, promotes and encourages the effective stewardship of Canada's biological diversity, and provides advice on federal programs and activities related to species at risk, so as to achieve the purposes of SARA.

SARAC consists of a maximum of 20 members drawn from a balanced number of non-governmental, industry and agriculture organizations, and other parties that are national in scope and nationally recognized as possessing particular expertise in wildlife science, public policy, and law development and/or implementation—all of whom are concerned with the effective implementation of SARA.

SARAC met in Ottawa for two face-to-face meetings in 2012 and held a number of teleconferences. SARAC continued work on a series of case studies examining action planning using multi-species and ecosystem approaches, case studies that demonstrate stewardship and collaborative processes used by the forest and agriculture industries, as well as examples of stewardship in Canada's oceans. SARAC met jointly with NACOSAR to discuss items of mutual interest, including recovery implementation, adaptive management and Aboriginal traditional knowledge in the SARA cycle.

7.2.3 Aboriginal Engagement Sessions on the Draft Guidance Document on Considering Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge in *Species at Risk Act* Implementation

In 2012, Fisheries and Oceans Canada hosted meetings in Halifax and Montreal to review and discuss the draft Guidance Document on Considering Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge in *Species at Risk Act* Implementation. Approximately 41 Aboriginal groups from across Central and Arctic, Quebec and Atlantic Regions attended the meetings.

Once finalized, the guidance document will be a key tool to provide advice on how to consider Aboriginal traditional knowledge in a respectful and meaningful way throughout the SARA conservation cycle.

7.3 Cooperation with Other Jurisdictions

SARA recognizes that the responsibility for conservation of wildlife in Canada is shared by federal, provincial and territorial governments. The federal government is responsible for terrestrial species found on federal lands, as well as aquatic species and migratory birds, while the provincial and territorial governments are primarily responsible for other species. SARA is designed to work with provincial and territorial legislation.

The federal, provincial and territorial governments agreed to the National Framework for Species at Risk Conservation in June 2007. This framework supports implementation of the 1996 Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk by providing a set of common principles, objectives and overarching approaches for species at risk conservation to guide federal, provincial and territorial species at risk programs and policies. The framework's objectives are to:

- facilitate coordination and cooperation among jurisdictions involved with species at risk;
- encourage greater national coherence and consistency in jurisdictional policies and procedures; and
- provide context and common ground for federal–provincial–territorial bilateral agreements.

7.3.1 Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council

The Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council (CESCC) was established under the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk, and is formally recognized under SARA. The CESCC is made up of federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for conservation and management of species at risk. Under SARA, the CESCC provides general direction on the activities of COSEWIC, the preparation of recovery strategies, and the preparation and implementation of action plans, and coordinates the activities of the various governments represented on the council related to the protection of species at risk.

Neither the CESCC nor its Deputy Ministers Committee met in 2012.

7.3.2 Bilateral Administrative Agreements

Administrative agreements are intended to foster collaboration on the implementation of SARA and provincial and territorial species at risk legislation. The establishment of governance structures for interjurisdictional cooperation is central to the effective implementation of the Act.

The federal government has negotiated bilateral administrative agreements on species at risk with various provinces and territories. The agreements set out shared objectives, and commitments for the governments to cooperate on species at risk initiatives. As of 2012, agreements have been signed with the governments of British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan, and a Memorandum of Understanding is in place with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

7.3.3 Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee

The Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee (CWDC) plays an important role in interjurisdictional cooperation on species at risk. The committee, co-chaired by Environment Canada and a province or territory on a rotating basis (Ontario in 2012), is comprised of federal, provincial and territorial wildlife directors, including representatives from Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Parks Canada Agency. As an advisory body on wildlife issues, the CWDC provides leadership in the development and coordination of policies, strategies, programs and activities that address wildlife issues of national concern and help conserve biodiversity. It also advises and supports the CESCC and the Wildlife Ministers' Council on these matters.

The CWDC meets twice a year and has monthly teleconferences, providing a forum for collaboration and integration of management and administration of federal and provincial/territorial species at risk programs. The CWDC's priority actions for 2012–2013 are comprised of five high-level outcomes: national and international collaborations, species at risk, population conservation, habitat conservation, and public engagement and human dimensions. CWDC members participated in a Cumulative Effects workshop as part of their bi-annual face-to-face meeting to gain a better understanding of the requirements to effectively conserve habitats.

7.3.4 National General Status Working Group

The National General Status Working Group (NGSWG), composed of representatives from the federal government and all provincial and territorial governments, was established by the CWDC to meet the commitment of monitoring, assessing and reporting on the status of wildlife, as required under the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk. Members of the group are responsible for completing the general status assessments of species in their jurisdictions, which the group then uses to produce the *Wild Species: The General Status of Species in Canada* reports.

Environment Canada is co-chair and coordinator of the NGSWG; the other co-chair is currently the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Other members from the federal government include the Parks Canada Agency and Fisheries and Oceans Canada. In 2009, three ex-officio members joined the working group: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Natural Resources Canada, and NatureServe Canada (www.natureserve-canada.ca). Members of the working group are responsible to the CWDC and ultimately to the CESCC.

In 2012, the NGSWG prepared the general status assessments of several groups of species for inclusion in the next report, *Wild Species 2015*.

7.4 Federal Coordinating Committees

The federal government has established governance structures to support federal implementation of SARA and its supporting programs. Several committees, composed of senior officials from Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Parks Canada Agency, meet regularly to discuss policy and strategic issues, and to monitor SARA implementation. These include:

- the Species at Risk Deputy Ministers Steering Committee;
- the Species at Risk Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee; and
- the Species at Risk Directors-General Operations Committee.

The Species at Risk Assistant Deputy Ministers Committee and the Species at Risk Directors-General Operations Committee met regularly in 2012 to discuss and provide direction on matters related to SARA implementation, such as:

- ongoing improvements to the SARA program, including SARA listing and recovery efforts;
- development and implementation of bilateral agreements, various policies, and program renewal; and
- approval of priorities and projects under the three species at risk funding programs (Habitat Stewardship Program, Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk and Interdepartmental Recovery Fund).

7.5 Species at Risk Public Registry

The online Species at Risk Public Registry fulfills the requirement under SARA for the Minister of the Environment to establish a public registry for the purpose of facilitating access to SARA-related documents. Information in the Species at Risk Public Registry is maintained through the collaborative efforts of partners and stakeholders, and is an important tool in engaging and informing Canadians on species at risk issues. In addition to providing access to documents and information related to the Act, the Public Registry provides a forum for Canadians to submit comments on SARA-related documents being developed by the Government of Canada.

Section 123 of SARA identifies documents that must be published on the Public Registry, including:

- regulations and orders made under the Act;
- agreements entered into under section 10 of the Act;
- COSEWIC's criteria for the classification of wildlife species;
- status reports on wildlife species that COSEWIC has prepared or has received with an application;
- the List of Wildlife Species at Risk;
- codes of practice, national standards or guidelines established under the Act;
- agreements and reports filed under section 111 or subsection 113(2) of the Act, or notices that these have been filed in court and are available to the public; and
- all reports made under sections 126 and 128 of the Act.

Other documents prepared in response to the requirements of SARA include recovery strategies, action plans, management plans, and reports on round-table meetings.

In 2012, 418 documents were published on the registry. Documents included SARA and COSEWIC annual reports, consultation documents, COSEWIC status reports and species assessments, ministerial response statements, recovery strategies, management plans, action plans, and 87 permit explanations. Consultations in 2012 were again on the upswing, with many Canadians voicing their opinions on the proposed listing of a variety of species. Of particular interest was the publication of the final version of the *Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou, Boreal population* (Rangifer tarandus caribou) *in Canada*, the proposed version of which garnered over 19 000 comments.

8 FURTHER INFORMATION

To obtain further information or publications—and to submit questions or comments—concerning species at risk programs and activities, please contact any of the following three departments:

Environment Canada
Inquiry Centre
10 Wellington Street, 23rd floor
Gatineau, Quebec
Canada K1A 0H3
Tel.: 819-997-2800
Tel.: 800-668-6767
Fax: 819-994-1412
Email: enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca

Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Communications Branch
200 Kent Street
3rd Floor, Station 13228
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1A 0E6
Tel.: 613-993-0999
Fax: 613-990-1866
Email: info@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Parks Canada Agency
National Office
25 Eddy Street
Gatineau, Quebec
Canada K1A 0M5
Tel.: 888-773-8888
Email: information@pc.gc.ca

Public Registry Office
For more information on the Species at Risk Public Registry, and to submit questions or comments on the Public Registry, please contact the following office:

SARA Public Registry Office
351 St. Joseph Boulevard, 21st Floor
Gatineau, Quebec
Canada K1A 0H3
Email: SARAregistry@ec.gc.ca

www.ec.gc.ca

Additional information can be obtained at:

Environment Canada
Inquiry Centre
10 Wellington Street, 23rd Floor
Gatineau QC K1A 0H3
Telephone: 1-800-668-6767 (in Canada only) or 819-997-2800
Fax: 819-994-1412
TTY: 819-994-0736
Email: enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca